US Weapons 1

 Soldiers in Basic Combat Training are taught how to utilize a variety of weapons in the US Arsenal.   During the first day of US Weapons training, Soldiers are introduced to three machine guns; the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW), the M240B and the M2 .50 Caliber Machine Gun.

Soldiers are taught how to recognize the ammunition used in each as well as taught how to load, maintain and utilize the weapons system. Each machine gun has it's own particular uses.

Soldiers must familiarize themselves with these weapons because they could just end up assigned as the primary gunner with one of these as their primary weapons systems.

Soldiers are typically most impressed with the M2, also known as the Ma-Duce. This large machine gun literally rocks the Soldiers as they fire at targets down range allowing them to fully appreciate it's power.

US Weapons 2

During the second day of US Weapons training, Soldiers are introduced to weapons with a little more kick. Soldiers receive training on the M18 Claymore mine, the AT-4 Anti-tank rocket launcher, the MK-19 and the M203 Grenade Launcher.

Once familiarized with the weapons systems, the Soldiers are brought down to the range and given the opportunity to utilize the M203 and the AT-4 with training (non-explosive) rounds. These training rounds allow the Soldiers to get a feel for what the weapon system will be like to use if they find themselves in need of it one day.

After the Solders fired their training rounds, The top marksman from each platoon was selected to demonstrate each of the weapons systems with live explosive rounds.

Each of the Soldiers firing their assigned weapon system was given a target within the range and directed to engage. It was a worthwhile reward for their demonstrated proficiency on the M16A2.

There is typically a toss-up on which weapon system is the favorite of the group, but it usually goes between the AT-4 and the Claymore mine. The AT-4 for its ability to reach out and cause some damage and the claymore's ability to make a really big explosion.

Hand Grenades

Each Soldier in BCT is required to throw two live hand grenades in addition to running the grenade assault course. Their training begins in the morning by learning to identify many key types of grenades. They are then taught several techniques on how to throw a grenade in different scenarios.

The Soldiers are given an opportunity to practice prior to entering the "Live Bay" where they are handed two live hand grenades. The range cadre supervise to ensure that they follow the proper steps when handling the grenade.

Once they have thrown their grenade, they are routed to the Grenade Assault Course. There are several stations that test the Soldiers' ability to properly handle a grenade and to accurately engage an enemy target in various positions.

Buddy Team Live Fire

The buddy team live fire course teaches the Soldiers how to maneuver as a buddy team in a combat situation. While maneuvering, the Soldiers are shooting live rounds, which require them to think twice about where they are aiming their weapons.

Soldiers are given a demonstration by the Drill Sergeants, then run through a practice course before taking on the course themselves. While the course is somewhat short, the stress level can take its toll.

Day & Night Defensive Fire

Our Soldiers learned how to utilize Night Vision Goggles and the PEQ-2 aiming laser during the second FTX. This range was their opportunity to put it to the test. The company arrived at the range just after midnight. Once all of the NVGs and weapons were properly set up, Soldiers began to take up defensive positions on the firing line and engaged targets as if they were being attacked.

The company stayed at the range until the sun came out and conducted the same defensive training in the daylight to simulate a daytime attack on a defensive position. Soldiers were also introduced to the concept of the burst setting on their M16A2 and shown how and when to effectively utilize it.